

No. R-451. House concurrent resolution welcoming the visiting military delegation from Macedonia and commemorating the continuing partnership between the state of Vermont and Macedonia.

(H.C.R.346)

Offered by: Representatives Head of South Burlington, Andrews of Rutland City, Bouchard of Colchester, Moran of Wardsboro, O'Sullivan of Burlington, Savage of Swanton, Smith of New Haven and Stevens of Waterbury

Whereas, in 1993, the U.S. Department of the Army created the invaluable National Guard State Partnership Program to enable foreign countries to partner with segments of the National Guard to foster long-term ties, and

Whereas, in March 1995, following the signing of the memorandum of understanding in 1994, a Vermont State Partnership Program was established with the Republic of Macedonia, and to date, Macedonia and Vermont have participated in more than 200 joint activities, and

Whereas, more than 4,000 members of the Ministry of Defense and armed forces of Macedonia have studied the military procedures of the U.S. Armed Forces, and

Whereas, the joint activities of the Vermont–Macedonia state partnership have also benefited the civilian sector in Macedonia, and

Whereas, the government of Macedonia participates in regional cooperation initiatives and provides assistance to neighboring countries, and

Whereas, during the Kosovo crisis of 1999, territory in Macedonia served as a staging area and main corridor for logistical support to the NATO Kosovo Force (commonly referred to as “KFOR”), and since 2006, the government of

Macedonia has led the KFOR Coordination Centre for logistical support in Skopje, the Macedonian capital, and

Whereas, until 2008, the government of Macedonia deployed troops to Iraq under the leadership of the government of the United States, and since April 2010, troops from Macedonia have been deployed to Afghanistan and have been embedded in the 86th Infantry Brigade Combat Team of the Vermont National Guard, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly welcomes Minister of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia, His Excellency Fatmir Besimi, and State Secretary, Ministry of Defense Petar Esmerov, and be it further

Resolved: That the General Assembly recognizes the cooperation between the state of Vermont and the Republic of Macedonia for the past 17 years, and the commitment of Macedonia to participate with the state of Vermont to advance international peace, democracy, and mutual understanding, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to Minister of Defence of the Republic of Macedonia, His Excellency Fatmir Besimi, to Director of the General Staff, Colonel Krume Velcov, and to Vermont Adjutant General Major General Michael Dubie.